



## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND CABLE

D.T.C. 13-4

April 1, 2013

Investigation by the Department on its Own Motion into the Implementation in Massachusetts of the Federal Communications Commission's Order Reforming the Lifeline Program

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### REQUEST FOR COMMENT & NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to the *Investigation by the Dep't on its Own Motion into the Implementation in Mass. of the Fed. Commc'ns Comm'n's Order Reforming the Lifeline Program*, D.T.C. 13-4, *Order Opening Investigation* ("Order Opening Investigation"), issued today, the Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Cable ("Department") seeks comment on the implementation of the Federal Communications Commission's ("FCC") *Lifeline Reform Order*.<sup>1</sup> The *Lifeline Reform Order* comprehensively reformed the Lifeline program, seeking to strengthen protections against waste, fraud, and abuse, and improve the program's efficiency. *Lifeline Reform Order*, ¶ 1. The FCC's reforms included placing new requirements on eligible telecommunications carriers ("ETCs") and outlined specific instances of states' authority to implement rules, consistent with those of the FCC, to "preserve and advance universal service." 47 U.S.C. § 254(f); *see Lifeline Reform Order*, ¶¶ 65, 140. Accordingly, the Department determined in the *Order Opening Investigation* that an investigation into the implementation of these changes is appropriate at this time. The scope of the Department's investigation will

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<sup>1</sup> The term "*Lifeline Reform Order*" refers to *In the Matter of Lifeline & Link Up Reform & Modernization, et al.*, WC Docket No. 11-42, et al., *Rep. & Order & Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, FCC 12-11 (rel. Feb. 6, 2012).

include the following topics: (1) compliance with existing Department requirements; (2) annual ETC certifications and other reporting obligations; (3) expansion of Lifeline eligibility criteria; (4) outreach, consumer safeguards, and service quality issues; and (5) other reasonably related matters.<sup>2</sup>

This proceeding has been docketed as D.T.C. 13-4 and is a formal adjudicatory proceeding conducted under G. L. c. 30A and 220 C.M.R. § 1.00 *et seq.* of the Standard Adjudicatory Rules of Practice and Procedure. In addition to seeking initial and reply comments, the Department will hold a public hearing in this docket and will consider possible additional procedures as may be necessary to fully investigate these issues. Parties wishing to comment on this matter may submit their comments in writing or electronically to:

Catrice C. Williams, Secretary  
Department of Telecommunications and Cable  
1000 Washington Street, Suite 820  
Boston, MA 02118-6500  
catrice.williams@state.ma.us

Initial comments must be received by 5:00 P.M. on April 29, 2013. Any person who desires to intervene in this proceeding must file a written petition for leave to intervene or to participate with Catrice C. Williams by 5:00 P.M. on April 29, 2013. Such petitions must satisfy the substantive requirements of 220 C.M.R. § 1.03. If possible, petitioners should submit their petitions to the Department in electronic format by e-mail attachment to [dtc.efiling@state.ma.us](mailto:dtc.efiling@state.ma.us). The text of the e-mails or written petitions must specify: (1) the name of petitioner; (2) the docket number; (3) the name of the person submitting the filing; (4) that person's title, if any; and (5) a brief descriptive title of the document (e.g., petition to intervene or participate). The

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed description of the topics the Department is seeking comment on in this docket is set forth in the Exhibit to this Request for Comment & Notice of Public Hearing available at [www.mass.gov/dtc](http://www.mass.gov/dtc).

petitions should also include the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing.

The public hearing for this docket will take place at:

10:00 A.M.  
May 14, 2013  
Department of Telecommunications and Cable  
Hearing Room 1-E  
1000 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02118

Reply comments in this proceeding must be received by 5:00 P.M. on May 28, 2013. For questions relating to this matter, please contact Catrice C. Williams at (617) 305-3580 or at [catrice.williams@state.ma.us](mailto:catrice.williams@state.ma.us). Please be sure to reference "D.T.C. 13-4 Lifeline Investigation" in the subject line of all submissions to the Department on this matter. In addition, please contact Catrice C. Williams to be included on the service list for this matter.